

Eternity Church

Family Matters

January 23, 2022

“Parenting God’s Way” By Garrett Milovich

Intro

- I wasn’t able to be here last week but I did watch the service online (Ryan/Nissa)
- The most impressive part of their message was they were able to stand up here teaching for an hour without fighting so you know it works!
- I’d encourage you to check it out

What do David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah all have in common?

- They all were great kings who did great things
- All of them had children who destroyed all the good things they had done

Family is important to God

- The very first story we read about in the Bible is God creating a family
- When God needs to save humanity from the flood, He calls upon a family
- When God wanted a chosen people, He spoke to Abraham and promised him a family
- Jesus is described as having a Father/Son relationship in the Bible
 - And we are called to be Sons and Daughters of God
- And when Paul talks about the gospel, he defines it as “In Christ all the families of the earth shall be blessed”

Family is incredibly important to God, and when you begin to realize this, you’ll find that family is a theme that comes up over and over again in the Bible

- So much comes down to family
- Nations have risen because people raised their family the biblical way and nations have crumbled because people rejected God’s instruction

So this morning, Pastor Jarrod asked me to speak about biblical parenting

- Which really worked out, because I can’t think of a subject that I am more passionate about
- I can’t think of a subject that is more necessary to be taught in the Church today

We're going to be looking at a number of scriptures this morning, but I want to drill in two points before we start

- Parenting is one of the most important things God has called you to do
- God has given you everything you need to parent well
 - Don't be overwhelmed by the task. You can do it! You can do it well!
 - But it does require diligence and commitment and time

Mark 12:28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. **30** And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. **31** And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

32 So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. **33** And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

But after that no one dared question Him.

- There was a tradition among the scribes of trying to summarize the 613 OT laws into as few laws as possible
- Notice that Jesus doesn't just quote the law part. "The LORD our God, the LORD is one"
- This scribe was wanting to hear Jesus' opinion on the subject
- And Jesus answers by quoting Deuteronomy 6

The Shema

- This was considered one of the most important scriptures in the Jewish faith

- It describes who God is, and then it describes what our response to God should be
- The Jewish people would pray it every morning and every night
- In fact, if you ask my son, “What is the Shema?” he will recite Deuteronomy 6 for you

Deuteronomy 6:1 “Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the Lord your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, **2** that you may fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. **3** Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’

4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

6 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. **7** You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

V. 1 – “This is THE commandment”

- Notice “commanded,” “teach,” and “observe” we’re going to come back to these later

V. 2 – “you and your son and your grandson”

- Notice that God is already talking generationally
- Follow what He is about to say and the blessing will carry down for generations

V. 3 – “Multiply” the very first thing God told Adam to do was “multiply”

- This commandment that Jesus is about to give us goes all the way back to God’s original commission for mankind

- And notice that when we keep this soon-to-be given commandment, we don't only multiply. We multiply GREATLY!

V. 5 – This is the commandment

- But God doesn't just give us the commandment
- God commands us what to do with this commandment

V. 7 – You shall teach them diligently to your children!

- Say “diligently”
- **Who shall teach them diligently to your children?**
 - YOU! Not Pastor Jarrod or Lucinda or Cameron or Sandra or me or anyone else
 - YOU!!!
 - In the OT model, you would only go to the temple maybe three times a year
 - And even then, it would really just be the adult men
 - So for the rest of the year, religious instruction was largely taking place in the home, with the father imparting what he had received in Jerusalem
 - **The father is the priest of his home**

Statistics...

Your job is to teach your children diligently

- The Hebrew word here literally means “to sharpen” or “to engrave”
 - We are to sharpen our children, to engrave them, to form them
 - With what?
 - With what Jesus said was the most important scripture
 - With a knowledge of God and a love for God
 - Which leads to a life lived for God
- **That is your job as a parent!**
 - ***To teach your children to know God, to love God, and to serve God***
 - That seems like a pretty daunting task, right?
 - But remember what I said at the beginning **YOU CAN DO THIS!**
 - So how do we do this?

Step 1: Teach Yourself

Deuteronomy 6:6 – *“And these words which I command you today shall be in YOUR heart”*

- You need to get it in your heart before you attempt to get it in someone else’s heart

My wife and I did youth ministry for ten years

- So many parents would wait until their kids were out of control, and then drop them off for church for an hour a week and get mad when we didn’t immediately fix their kid
- It’s not the youth pastor’s job to teach your children to love God
- It’s YOUR job!

So how do you get this into your heart?

- Read the Bible every day let your kids see you reading (show them it’s important to you)
- Pray every day
- Practice memorizing scripture
- Get involved in church
 - Go to Men’s/Women’s Ministry this is the most important ministry in the church, in my opinion
 - Volunteer

Let God transform your life, and that will prepare you to transform your children’s lives

Step 2: Teach Your Children

Deuteronomy 6:7 – *“You shall teach them diligently to your children”*

As I said before, the father is the priest of the home

- And as priest, it is your job to form Christ in your children

Here are a few pointers...

- Be practical
 - You don’t need to reach ten chapters a day with your kids
 - In our family, we read one chapter every morning, then discuss and pray
 - Start with something reasonable

- Use routine to your advantage (“when you sit, when you lie down, when you rise up...”)
 - You already have a bunch of daily routines eating dinner, going to bed, waking up, driving to school
 - Incorporate God into those established routines
 - Always read a bible story and pray before bed
 - Always read a chapter of the bible during dinner
 - Always pray for Pastor Jarrod and Joe Biden while driving to church on Sundays
- Take advantage of every opportunity (“when you walk by the way...”)
 - Opportunities arise every day, turn those into learning experiences
 - Talk about God’s majesty if you see a sunset
 - If you son is having trouble with a kid at school, give him biblical wisdom and pray with him
 - If your kids are fighting, teach your kids to repent, to forgive, to exercise patience and self-control
 - Don’t beat yourself up over missed opportunities, but be diligent to take advantage of the next one

Step 3: Center Your Life around God

Deuteronomy 6:8-9 – *“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand...”*

Notice the scope of these verses

- You talk about God’s Word when you’re sitting and when you’re walking, when you’re at home and you’re out, from when you rise up to when you lie down
 - In other words, you’re always talking about God’s Word
- You bind God’s Word to your hands. Everything you do is guided by God’s Word
- You put God’s Word between your eyes. Everything you focus on is viewed through the lens of God’s Word
- You write them on your house and on the city gates. Everywhere you go, you are taking God’s Word with you

In other words, everything in your world is meant to be founded upon God’s Word

- That’s how you LOVE God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength

- Every word you speak, everything you do, every thought you think, every place you go

Now again, that might feel daunting, so I want to encourage you...

- You don't have to be perfect, but you do have to make an effort
- Nobody is perfect and I promise that you will make mistakes
 - Your mistakes won't ruin your children
 - On the contrary, your mistakes are an opportunity to teach your children how to repent
 - Because just like you, your kids will make mistakes
 - And when your children screw up, you want them to run to Jesus and repent, not run away and hide from God

Your kids aren't dumb

- There is a vast difference between trying to live for God and messing up; and not caring how you live
- If you behave one way for an hour every Sunday at church and behave like a heathen for the rest of your week, you aren't teaching your kids faith
 - You're teaching them hypocrisy
 - And I can tell you, millions of Christian kids have learned how to be hypocrites from their hypocrite parents
 - But millions of Christian kids have also learned repentance and faith and love and joy from their imperfect parents
 - And those are the kinds of parents we want to be

Summary

So in closing, I want to summarize what we discussed this morning and then give you a few practical things you can do to raise up your kids in the LORD

It's the parents' job to teach their children

- The father is the priest of his home
 - *If you are in a family situation where there isn't a Christian father in the home, that's okay. The bible is filled with examples of children raised by independent mothers (Samuel, Timothy). But in addition to following these instructions from Deuteronomy 6, I'd encourage you*

to make friendships with families that have a godly father who can help disciple your kids (especially your sons).

- We are instructed to teach our kids to know God, to love God, and to serve God
- We teach them this:
 - By teaching ourselves
 - By intentionally teaching our children, using routine and taking advantage of opportunities as they arise
 - And by centering our lives on God

Here is what we do in our family (you don't have to do all of this or any of this; this is what we have found works for us)

- We read a chapter of the Bible about every morning, discuss, and pray
 - We started with Genesis and just started Ezra
 - All of the kids pray (even if it's our two-year-old saying, "Jesus Amen!")
- Cheyne and I read a chapter every night, discuss, and pray
 - In this way, I'm discipling my wife and leading her (your wife will love this)
 - Also, our kids see that this is a priority even when they are supposed to be sleeping
- We've been memorizing 1-2 psalms every month
 - I memorize them first (kids see this is important to daddy)
 - I have them repeat after me at least once a day
 - This has turned into a great way to get them to stop fighting and calm down
- We go through a few questions from our catechism over dinner at the table
 - A catechism is basically a list of 80 or so important doctrinal beliefs
 - I wrote one for our family (not published yet) which is a bit less Calvinist and more faith-filled
- We celebrate the Sabbath dinner (almost) every Friday night
 - I bless each child from Numbers 6, tell them something they did this week that we're proud of, and then pray for them
 - I read Proverbs 31 over my wife and we all bless her and pray for her
 - The kids added a tradition where they tell me that they are thankful for me for providing for them that week

You don't have to do any of these, but I'd encourage you to make some sort of bible reading and prayer a part of your daily routine

Closing

As we close, I again want to encourage you

- You can do this. You can raise godly children to know God, to love God, and to serve God and others

And remember those three words I told you to remember at the very beginning?

- “command, teach, observe”
- If you are sitting here and you don’t have kids, or your kids are already raised, God still has a work for you to do

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

- “... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”
- In the Great Commission, Jesus uses the exact same language as He did in the Shema
- That’s because the Great Commission wasn’t a new commandment
 - It was an extension of what Jesus considered to be the most important commandment
- Remember what it said in the Shema
 - Teach God’s word when you are home, and then teach it when you... go out into all the world

Book recommendations

- Man Up by Jeffrey Hemmer
- Family Discipleship by Matt Chandler
- Family Worship by Donald Whitney